

## Voting Intentions for Statewide Elections

As we look ahead to the upcoming statewide elections, Virginia voters were surprisingly consistent in their preferences across races. However, with more than three months to go before Election Day, a good number remain undecided.

In the election for Virginia's governor, Democrat Ralph Northam holds a five-point lead over Republican Ed Gillespie among likely voters—42 percent to 37 percent. Libertarian candidate Cliff Hyra garnered 6 percent of the vote, while 13 percent of voters remained undecided in the race.

The Democrat holds the same lead in the lieutenant governor's race, with 43 percent of likely voters supporting Justin Fairfax and 38 percent supporting Republican Jill Vogel. A sizable percentage, 15 percent, remain undecided.

A similar lead is held in the attorney general race, with 45 percent of likely voters choosing Democrat Mark Herring and 39 percent choosing John Adams. Again, a sizable percentage (15 percent) are undecided.

The poll also asked respondents which party they would rather see win control of the Virginia General Assembly. Again a plurality of 48 percent of likely voters responded that they would rather the Democrats control the General Assembly. That is compared to 41 percent who would prefer Republican control.

### The Race for Governor

In the governor's race voting intentions are closely aligned with party identification. Republican voters support Gillespie over Northam by a wide margin—71 percent for Gillespie to just 2 percent for Northam. Similar portions of Democratic voters support Northam (75 percent for Northam to 5 percent

#### Candidate choice

*If the election for ... were held today, would you vote for ...?*

<b>Governor</b>	Registered voters %	Likely voters %
Northam	39	42
Gillespie	33	37
Hyra	8	6
None of these	4	2
Undecided	<u>16</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100

<b>Lt. Governor</b>	Registered voters %	Likely voters %
Fairfax	41	43
Vogel	34	38
Neither	7	3
Undecided	<u>18</u>	<u>15</u>
	100	100

<b>Atty. General</b>	Registered voters %	Likely voters %
Herring	43	45
Adams	36	39
Neither	4	1
Undecided	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>
	100	100

Source: 2017 Summer Public Policy Poll, VCU's Office for Public Policy Outreach, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

for Gillespie). Gillespie garners 24 percent to Northam's 11 percent among independents who are registered to vote. Independents are more likely to support the Libertarian candidate, Hyra, with 18 percent, and have a larger percentage, 31 percent, that are undecided.

Northam garnered more support from minority voters with 61 percent versus only 15 percent supporting Gillespie. Whites were more evenly split with 42 percent supporting Gillespie and 29 percent supporting Northam. Northam also has a greater level of support from women, with 44 percent and 30 percent preferring Gillespie.

Northam has a sizeable lead in Northern Virginia (54 percent to 25 percent). Gillespie leads in the West (47 percent to 21 percent). Voters are split in the Northwest with 38 percent supporting Gillespie and 35 percent

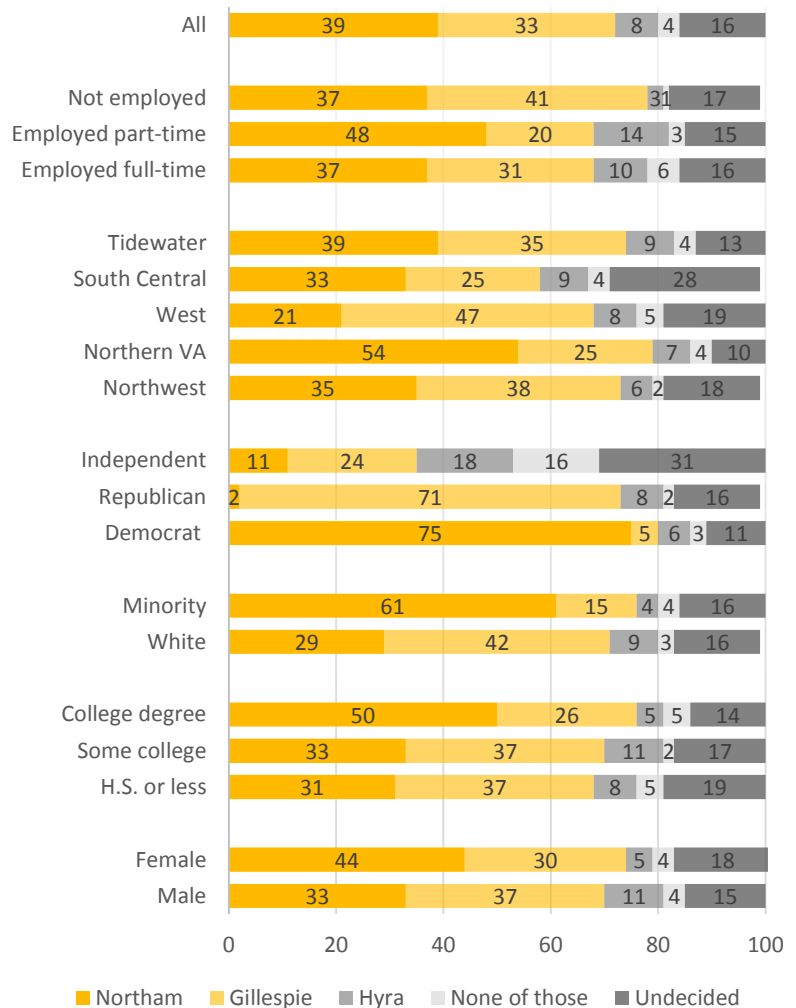
for Northam and in Tidewater with 39 percent supporting Northam and 35 percent for Gillespie.

College-educated voters were more likely to support Northam—50 percent versus 26 percent for Gillespie. Those with some college experience or a high school diploma or less were more evenly split. Thirty-seven percent of those voters support Gillespie.

The voter's current employment status also played a role. Those who are not employed were more likely to support Gillespie at 41 percent and those who are employed part-time are more likely to

## Governor's Race

*If the election for governor were held today, would you vote for Ralph Northam, Ed Gillespie or Cliff Hyra?*



Source: 2017 Summer Public Policy Poll, VCU's Office for Public Policy Outreach, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs  
Based on registered voters

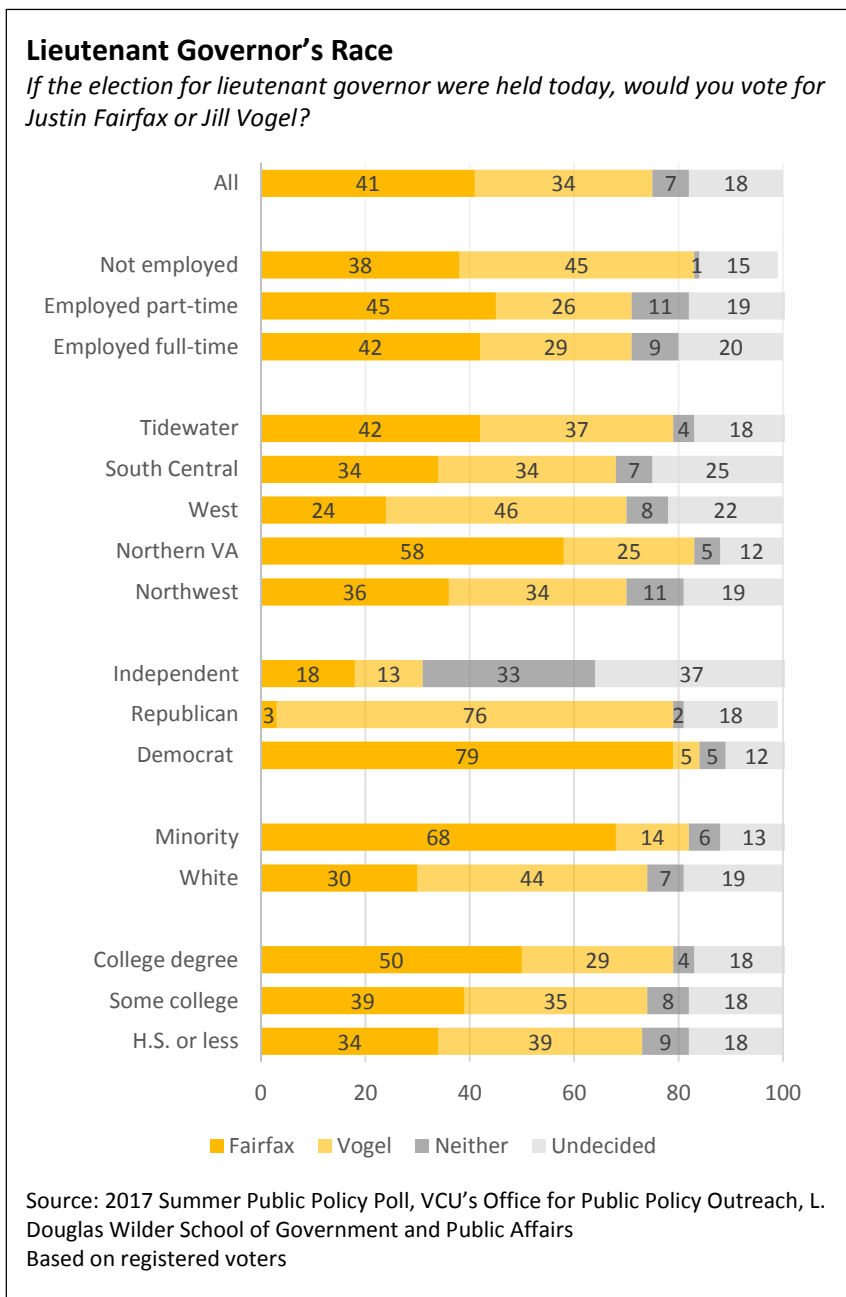
support Northam, with 37 percent. It is important to note that employment status was related to the respondent's age. Forty-four percent of those who are not employed are ages 65 or older and 58 percent of those who are employed part-time are 18-34.

### The Race for Lieutenant Governor

In the lieutenant governor's race we see similar demographic differences relating to vote intention. Again, vote intention is aligned with party identification, with 79 percent of Democrats supporting Fairfax versus only 5 percent for Vogel. Similar proportions of Republican voters support Vogel, with 76 percent and only 3 percent for Fairfax. Independents were much more likely to offer preferring neither candidate with 33 percent and a large portion, 37 percent, were still undecided.

Again, minorities were more likely to support the Democratic candidate with 68 percent for Fairfax versus only 14 percent for Vogel. White voters were more evenly split, with 44 percent

preferring Vogel and 30 percent Fairfax. Level of education played a similar role in this race with



college-educated voters being more likely to support Fairfax, with 50 percent, and 29 percent for Vogel. Those with some college experience or less were more evenly split. There was a similar trend with employment status with voters who are not employed being more likely to support Vogel with 45 percent and the same percentage of those who are employed part-time supporting Fairfax.

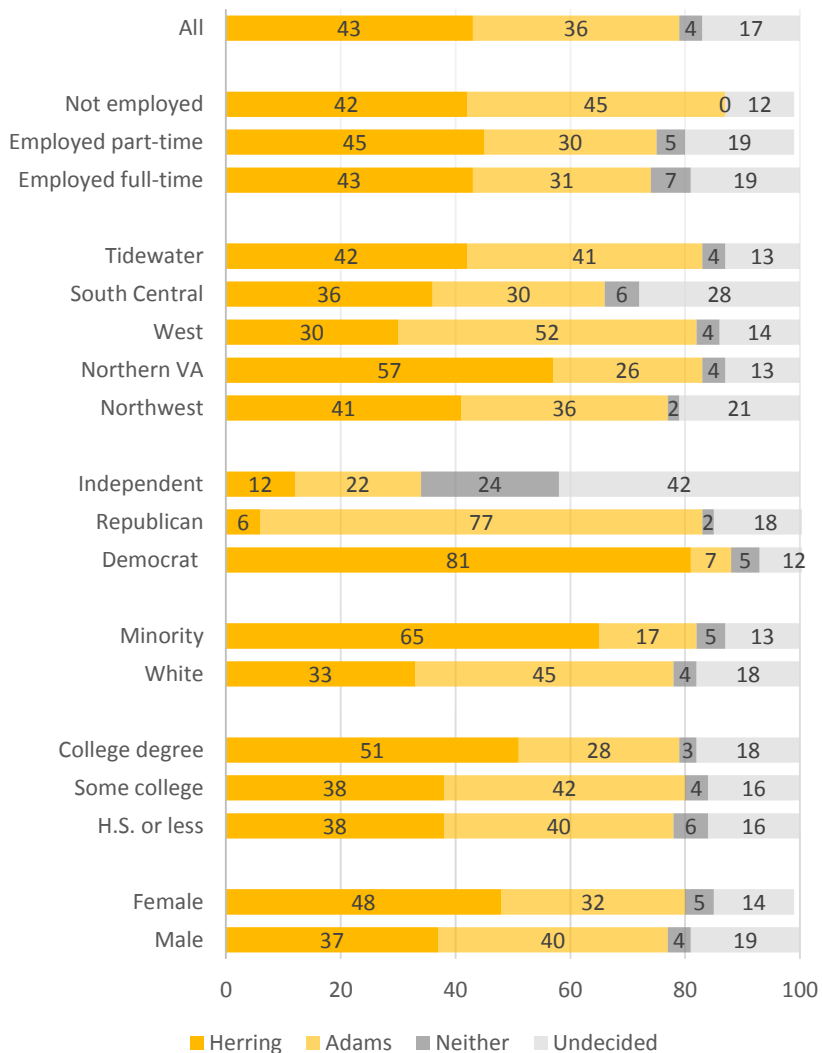
Regionally, we see similar levels of vote intention in this race. Fairfax has a sizeable lead in Northern Virginia (58 percent to 25 percent). Vogel leads in the West (46 percent to 24 percent). Voters are split in the Northwest with 36 percent supporting Fairfax and 34 percent for Vogel and in Tidewater with 42 percent supporting Fairfax and 37 percent for Vogel. Voters in the South Central region were evenly split with 34 percent support each of the candidates. Larger proportions of voters remain undecided in South Central and the West, with 25 percent and 22 percent respectively.

## The Race for Attorney General

Voting intentions remained consistent in the attorney general's race as well. Again, party identification played a major role with 81 percent of Democrats supporting Herring versus only 7

### Attorney General's Race

*If the election for attorney general were held today, would you vote for Mark Herring or John Adams?*



Source: 2017 Summer Public Policy Poll, VCU's Office for Public Policy Outreach, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs  
Based on registered voters

percent for Adams. Similar proportions of Republican voters support Adams with 77 percent and only 6 percent for Herring. Independents were much more likely to offer preferring neither candidate with 24 percent and a large portion, 42 percent, still undecided.

As in the other races, minorities were more likely to support the Democratic candidate with 65 percent for Herring versus only 17 percent for Adams. White voters were more evenly split with 45 percent preferring Herring and 33 percent for Adams. Again, college-educated voters were more likely to support the Democrat, Herring, with 51 percent and 28 percent for Adams.

Voters who are not employed remained consistent, being more likely to support the Republican candidate, Adams, with 45 percent and the same percentage of those who are employed part-time supporting Herring.

Regional differences remained consistent as well. The Democrat, Herring, has a sizeable lead in Northern Virginia (57 percent to 26 percent) and Adams leads in the West (52 percent to 30 percent). In South Central and the Northwest region voters are closer in their levels of support. In this race voters were almost evenly split in Tidewater with 42 percent supporting Herring and 41 percent for Adams. Larger proportions of voters remain undecided in South Central and the Northwest, at 28 percent and 21 percent, respectively.

### Control of the General Assembly

Respondents also were asked which party they would rather see win control of the General Assembly. Voters remained consistent with their voting preferences, with 46 percent saying they would rather see the

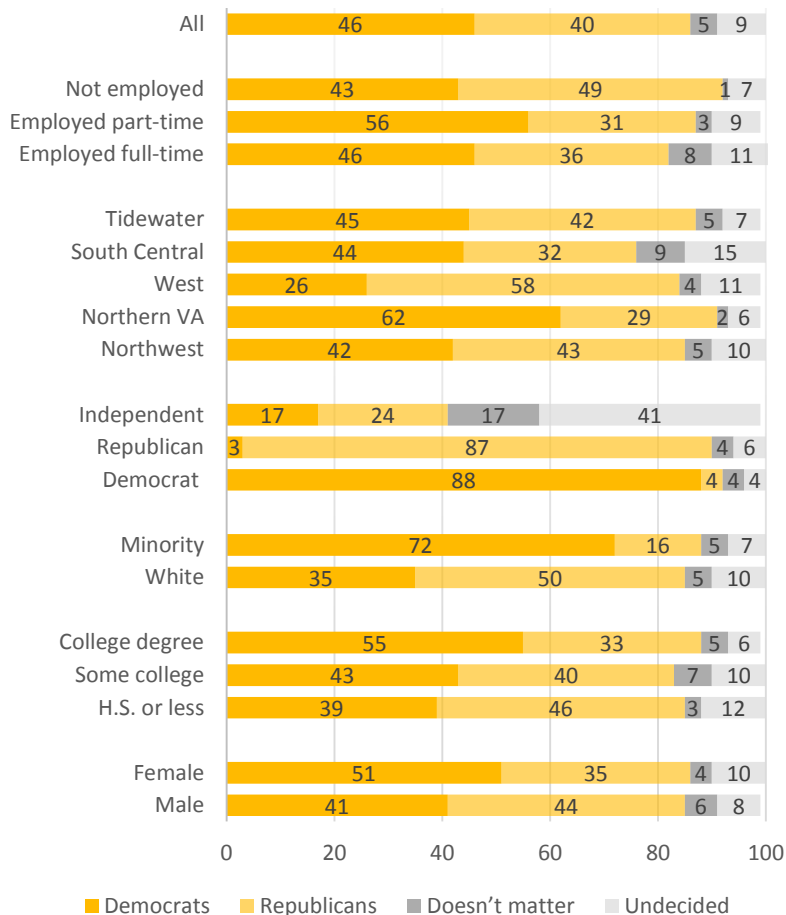
Democrats in control and 40 percent saying the Republicans. Only 5 percent offered that it doesn't matter and 9 percent were undecided.

Demographic differences were the same as vote choice. Party identification was consistent with choice of party control with 88 percent of Democrats wanting Democratic control and 87 percent of Republicans preferring Republican control. Again, Independents were much more likely to be undecided with 41 percent, and 17 percent offering that it doesn't matter.

Minorities were much more likely to prefer Democratic control with 72 percent and whites were more likely to prefer Republican with 50 percent. Females were more likely to want Democratic control with 51 percent. A majority of college-educated voters (55 percent) also preferred Democratic control.

### Control of General Assembly

*Which party would you rather see win control of the Virginia General Assembly?*



Source: 2017 Summer Public Policy Poll, VCU's Office for Public Policy Outreach, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs  
Based on registered voters

Those with less educational experience were more evenly split. Voters who are not employed were more likely to prefer Republican control (49 percent) than those who have part-time or full-time employment (31 percent and 36 percent respectively).

The regional differences remained the same with voters in Northern Virginia preferring Democratic control by a large margin, 62 percent, and those in the West region preferring Republican control with 58 percent. Voters in the South Central region were closer in their preference with 44 percent wanting Democratic control and 32 percent Republican. Tidewater and the Northwest were almost evenly split.

## **Methodology of the VCU Wilder School Public Policy Poll**

The 2017 Summer Public Policy Poll, sponsored by the Office of Public Policy at VCU's L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, obtained telephone interviews with a representative sample of 806 adults, age 18 or older, living in Virginia. Telephone interviews were conducted by landline (396) and cell phone (410, including 235 without a landline phone). The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI). Interviews were done in English by Princeton Data Source from July 17-25, 2017. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is  $\pm 4.2$  percentage points. The margin of error for registered voter (707 adults) is  $\pm 4.5$  percentage points and for likely voters (538 voters),  $\pm 5.1$  percentage points.

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in Virginia who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to PSRAI specifications. Numbers for the landline sample were drawn with probabilities in proportion to their share of listed telephone households from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

The data are weighted to adjust for unequal probabilities of selection due to multiple adults living in landline households and for frame size of the landline and cell phone sampling frames. In addition, the data are weighted on sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region of residence and population density to reflect the demographic composition of the adult population in Virginia. Percentages reported in the text and tables are weighted, while the number of cases shown in the tables for various subgroups is the actual number of respondents.

Questions answered by the full sample of adults are subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 4.2 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence. This means that in 95 out of 100 samples like the one used here, the results obtained should be no more than 4.2 percentage points above or below the figure that would be obtained by interviewing all Virginian residents with telephones. Where the answers of subgroups are reported, the sampling error would be higher. Because of non-response (refusals to participate, etc.), standard calculations of sampling error are apt to understate the actual extent to which survey results are at variance with the true population values. Surveys are also subject to errors from sources other than sampling. While every effort is made to identify such errors, they are



often difficult or impossible to measure. Readers making use of the results are urged to be mindful of the limitations inherent in survey research.

**2017 Summer Public Policy Poll, VCU's Office for Public Policy Outreach,  
L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs**

Statewide survey of Virginians<sup>1</sup>

July 17-25, 2017

Number of Respondents: 806

**QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 16 BEING HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

On a different topic...

REGISTER. Some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you registered to vote in Virginia at your current address?

	<b>Aug 17</b>	
	%	N
Yes	85	707
No	15	95
Don't Know/Refused	0	4

**ASK IF REGISTER=1:**

LIKELY. Now thinking about the election this November... As of today, would you say you will definitely vote, probably vote, probably will NOT vote, or definitely will NOT vote this November?

	<b>Aug 17</b>	
	%	N
Definitely WILL	70	538
Probably WILL	21	125
Probably will NOT	6	29
Definitely will NOT	2	12
Don't Know/Refused	0	3

**ASK IF REGISTER=1:**

Q17. If the election for Governor were being held today, would you vote for **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

	<b>Aug 17</b>	
	<b>Registered voters</b>	<b>Likely voters</b>
	%	%
Ralph Northam, the Democrat	39	42
Ed Gillespie, the Republican	33	37
Cliff Hyra, the Libertarian	8	6
None of these	4	2
Don't Know/Refused	16	13

**ASK IF REGISTER=1:**

Q18. If the election for Lieutenant Governor were being held today, would you vote for **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

**Aug 17**

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages may add to 99 or 101 due to rounding. Cells that are blank contain no cases. Cells with a zero percent entry contain cases, but the percentage is less than 0.5%.

	<b>Registered voters</b>	<b>Likely voters</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Justin Fairfax, the Democrat	41	43
Jill Vogel, the Republican	34	38
Neither	7	3
Don't Know/Refused	18	15

**ASK IF REGISTER=1:**

Q19. If the election for Attorney General were being held today, would you vote for [READ AND RANDOMIZE]

	<b>Aug 17</b>	
	<b>Registered voters</b>	<b>Likely voters</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Mark Herring, the Democrat	43	45
John Adams, the Republican	36	39
Neither	4	1
Don't Know/Refused	17	15

**ASK IF REGISTER=1:**

Q20. Which party would you rather see win control of the Virginia General Assembly? [READ AND RANDOMIZE]

	<b>Aug 17</b>	
	<b>Registered voters</b>	<b>Likely voters</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
The Democratic Party	46	48
The Republican Party	40	41
Doesn't matter	5	3
Don't Know/Refused	9	8

**Tables for Subgroup Analysis**  
Based on Registered Voters

		Q17. If the election for Governor were being held today, would you vote for [READ AND RANDOMIZE]					Number of cases
		Ralph Northam	Ed Gillespie	Cliff Hyra	None of these (Volunteered)	Don't know	
All adults		39%	33%	8%	4%	16%	806
VA Region	Northwest	35%	38%	6%	2%	18%	102
	Northern VA	54%	25%	7%	4%	10%	199
	West	21%	47%	8%	5%	19%	114
	South Central	33%	25%	9%	4%	28%	134
	Tidewater	39%	35%	9%	4%	13%	158
Gender	Men	33%	37%	11%	4%	15%	331
	Women	44%	30%	5%	4%	18%	376
Age	18-34	40%	24%	15%	5%	17%	96
	35-44	38%	31%	12%	3%	15%	78
	45-64	37%	39%	4%	5%	15%	277
	65 and older	43%	37%	2%	1%	17%	237
Education	H.S. or less	31%	37%	8%	5%	19%	181
	Some college	33%	37%	11%	2%	17%	165
	College grad or more	50%	26%	5%	5%	14%	358
Family Income	Under \$50,000	38%	32%	7%	6%	17%	196
	50K to under \$100,000	36%	30%	14%	6%	14%	193
	\$100,000 or more	44%	37%	5%	1%	13%	208
Race	White	29%	42%	9%	3%	16%	507
	Minority	61%	15%	4%	4%	16%	175
Employment status	Employed full-time	37%	31%	10%	6%	16%	329
	Employed part-time	48%	20%	14%	3%	15%	72
	Not employed	37%	41%	3%	1%	17%	305
Party identification	Democrat	75%	5%	6%	3%	11%	338
	Republican	2%	71%	8%	2%	16%	301
	Independent	11%	24%	18%	16%	31%	47

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		Q18. If the election for Lieutenant Governor were being held today, would you vote for [READ AND RANDOMIZE]				
		Justin Fairfax	Jill Vogel	Neither (Volunteered)	Don't Know	Number of cases
All adults		41%	34%	7%	18%	806
VA Region	Northwest	36%	34%	11%	19%	102
	Northern VA	58%	25%	5%	12%	199
	West	24%	46%	8%	22%	114
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Race	White	30%	44%	7%	19%	507
	Minority	68%	14%	6%	13%	175
Employment status	Employed full-time	42%	29%	9%	20%	329
	Employed part-time	45%	26%	11%	19%	72
	Not employed	38%	45%	1%	15%	305
Party identification	Democrat	79%	5%	5%	12%	338
	Republican	3%	76%	2%	18%	301
	Independent	18%	13%	33%	37%	47

		Q19. If the election for Attorney General were being held today, would you vote for [READ AND RANDOMIZE]				
		Mark Herring	John Adams	Neither (Volunteered)	Don't Know	Number of cases
All adults		43%	36%	4%	17%	806
VA Region	Northwest	41%	36%	2%	21%	102
	Northern VA	57%	26%	4%	13%	199
	West	30%	52%	4%	14%	114
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	Not employed	42%	45%	0%	12%	305
Party identification	Democrat	81%	7%	3%	10%	338
	Republican	6%	77%	2%	16%	301
	Independent	12%	22%	24%	42%	47

		Q20. Which party would you rather see win control of the Virginia General Assembly?				Number of cases
		Democratic Party	Republican Party	Doesn't matter (Volunteered)	Don't Know	
All adults		46%	40%	5%	9%	806
VA Region	Northwest	42%	43%	5%	10%	102
	Northern VA	62%	29%	2%	6%	199
	West	26%	58%	4%	11%	114
	South Central	44%	32%	9%	15%	134
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	Women	51%	35%	4%	10%	376
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